

A SECURE CRYPTOGRAPHIC COMMUNICATION SYSTEM USING KEM-DEM

This invention relates to a secure communication system.

More particularly, the invention relates to a secure communication system which enables a user of the system to send securely a message (the same message) to each of a plurality of other users of the system.

One known secure communication scheme is public key cryptography. Public key cryptography has traditionally been concerned with two parties communicating. Party A wishes to send data securely to party B. Party A encrypts the data with party B's public key. Party B decrypts the data using its private key (corresponding to its public key as used by party A).

Public key algorithms are very slow. Accordingly, if party A wishes to send a large amount of data to party B, party A first encrypts a symmetric session key with party B's public key, and transmits this to party B. Party A then encrypts the large amount of data using the fast symmetric cipher keyed by the session key. Such a combination of public key and symmetric techniques is termed a hybrid encryption algorithm.

In recent years, the hybrid approach has been developed by use of the so called KEM-DEM philosophy. A key encapsulation mechanism (KEM) utilises party B's public key pk_B to provide both a symmetric session key K , and an encryption of K under pk_B . This encryption will be denoted $EB(K)$. A symmetric data encapsulation mechanism (DEM) then uses K to symmetrically encrypt the data (message) to be transmitted. This encryption will be denoted $SEK(M)$. Party A transmits to party B both $EB(K)$ and $SEK(M)$. Party B recovers K from $EB(K)$ using party B's private key sk_B , and then uses K to recover M from $SEK(M)$.

The use of the KEM-DEM philosophy allows the different components of a hybrid encryption scheme to be designed in isolation, leading to simpler analysis and potentially more efficient schemes. However, problems occur when one departs from the traditional two-party setting. Party A may wish to send a large amount of data to two parties B and C. For example, party A may wish to encrypt an email to parties B and C, or encrypt a file on party A's computer to parties B and C. In this case, the KEM would: (i) utilise party B's public key pk_B to provide both a symmetric session key K_B , and an encryption of K_B under pk_B ; and (ii) utilise party C's public key pk_C to provide both a further symmetric session key K_C , and an encryption of K_C under pk_C . The DEM would then: (i) use K_B to symmetrically encrypt the large amount of data for party B; and (ii) use K_C to symmetrically encrypt the large amount of data for party C. It will be seen that the data has been encrypted twice. This is clearly inefficient, particularly where the amount of data is large.

According to a first aspect of the present invention there is provided a secure communication system comprising: a communications network; at a sending location on said network: (i) an encapsulator for providing (a) a session key, and (b) a plurality of asymmetric encryptions of the session key, each said encryption corresponding to a respective receiving location on said network; and (ii) a symmetric encryptor for utilising said session key to encrypt a message; and, at each said receiving location on said network: (i) a decapsulator for decrypting the encryption of said plurality of encryptions which corresponds to that receiving location to provide said session key; and (ii) a symmetric decryptor for utilising the session key to decrypt the message, said encapsulator comprising: a pseudo random number generator; symmetric key derivation means for deriving said session key from a first random number generated by said

pseudo random number generator; means for utilising said first random number to generate a second random number; and means for utilising the first keys of asymmetric encryption key pairs of the intended recipients at the receiving locations together with said second random number and said first random number to generate said plurality of asymmetric encryptions of the session key, said decapsulator at each receiving location comprising: means for utilising the second key of the asymmetric encryption key pair of the recipient at the receiving location together with the asymmetric encryption corresponding to the receiving location to recover said first random number; and a further symmetric key derivation means for deriving said session key from said first random number.

According to a second aspect of the present invention there is provided a secure communication system comprising: a communications network; at a sending location on said network an encryptor for providing a plurality of asymmetric encryptions of a message, each said encryption corresponding to a respective receiving location on said network, said encryptor comprising: means for deriving from said message a first random number; and means for utilising the first keys of asymmetric encryption key pairs of the intended recipients at the receiving locations together with said first random number and said message to generate said plurality of asymmetric encryptions of the message; and, at each said receiving location on said network a decryptor for decrypting the encryption of said plurality of encryptions which corresponds to that receiving location to provide said message, said decryptor comprising means for utilising the second key of the asymmetric encryption key pair of the recipient at the receiving location together with the asymmetric encryption corresponding to the receiving location to recover the message.

According to a third aspect of the present invention there is provided a secure communication method comprising: at a sending location on a communications network: (i) providing (a) a session key, and (b) a plurality of asymmetric encryptions of the session key, each said encryption corresponding to a respective receiving location on said network; and (ii) utilising said session key to encrypt symmetrically a message; and, at each said receiving location on said network: (i) decrypting the encryption of said plurality of encryptions which corresponds to that receiving location to provide said session key; and (ii) utilising the session key to decrypt the message, said step (i) carried out at the sending location comprising: generating a first random number; deriving said session key from said first random number; utilising said first random number to generate a second random number; and utilising the first keys of asymmetric encryption key pairs of the intended recipients at the receiving locations together with said second random number and said first random number to generate said plurality of asymmetric encryptions of the session key, said step (i) carried out at each receiving location comprising: utilising the second key of the asymmetric encryption key pair of the recipient at the receiving location together with the asymmetric encryption corresponding to the receiving location to recover said first random number; and deriving said session key from said first random number.

According to a fourth aspect of the present invention there is provided a secure communication method comprising: at a sending location on a communications network providing a plurality of asymmetric encryptions of a message, each said encryption corresponding to a respective receiving location on said network, said step of providing said plurality of asymmetric encryptions comprising: deriving from said message a first random number; and utilising the first keys of asymmetric encryption key pairs of the

intended recipients at the receiving locations together with said first random number and said message to generate said plurality of asymmetric encryptions of the message; and, at each said receiving location on said network decrypting the encryption of said plurality of encryptions which corresponds to that receiving location to provide said message, said step of decrypting comprising utilising the second key of the asymmetric encryption key pair of the recipient at the receiving location together with the asymmetric encryption corresponding to the receiving location to recover the message.

The invention will now be described, by way of example, with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:

10 Fig 1 is a block schematic diagram of a secure communication system;

Fig 2 is a block schematic diagram of an encapsulator of the system of Fig 1, which encapsulator is not in accordance with the present invention but is useful for understanding the present invention;

15 Fig 3 is a block schematic diagram of a decapsulator of the system of Fig 1, which decapsulator is not in accordance with the present invention but is useful for understanding the present invention;

Figs 4 and 5 illustrate an alternative encapsulator/decapsulator combination to that of Figs 2 and 3, which alternative encapsulator/decapsulator combination is in accordance with the present invention; and

20 Figs 6, 7 and 8 illustrate a modification to the secure communication systems of Figs 1 to 3, and Figs 1, 4 and 5, which modification is in accordance with the present invention.

Referring to Fig 1, the communication system comprises: a communications network; at a sending location on the network, an encapsulator 1 and a symmetric

encryptor 3; and, at each of a plurality of receiving locations 1, 2, 3 ... i ... n on the network, a decapsulator 5 and a symmetric decryptor 7.

A user located at the sending location wishes to send a message M (the same message) to each of the users located at receiving locations 1 to n. Each of the users at receiving locations 1 to n possesses a personal public/private key pair assigned as part of a public key cryptography communication scheme. The public/private keys assigned to the user located at receiving location 1 will be denoted pk1/sk1 respectively, the public/private keys assigned to the user located at receiving location 2 will be denoted pk2/sk2 respectively, etc.

10 At the sending location, public keys pk1, pk2, pk3 ... pki ... pkn are supplied to encapsulator 1, which utilises the keys to provide respective encryptions of a session key K, i.e. encapsulator 1 provides an encryption of session key K utilising public key pk1, an encryption of session key K utilising public key pk2, etc. The encryption of K utilising pk1 will be denoted E1(K), the encryption of K utilising pk2 will be denoted E2(K), etc. Thus, encapsulator 1 provides $E = E1(K), E2(K), E3(K) \dots Ei(K) \dots En(K)$. Encapsulator 1 also provides session key K in unencrypted form.

The message M to be sent is supplied to symmetric encryptor 3. Symmetric encryptor 3 utilises the session key K in unencrypted form provided by encapsulator 1 to symmetrically encrypt message M. The symmetric encryption of M utilising K will be denoted SEK(M).

20 By means of the communications network, the sending location transmits $E = E1(K), E2(K), E3(K) \dots Ei(K) \dots En(K)$, and SEK(M) to each of receiving locations 1 to n.

At receiving location 1, the private key sk_1 of the user at that location is supplied to decapsulator 5. Decapsulator 5 is also in receipt of transmitted E , and uses sk_1 to decrypt that part of E encrypted using the public key pk_1 corresponding to sk_1 , i.e. decapsulator 5 uses sk_1 to decrypt $E_1(K)$ to provide session key K . Decapsulator 5
5 also provides a Flag to specify whether the decryption was successful. Session key K is supplied to symmetric decryptor 7. Symmetric decryptor 7 is also in receipt of transmitted $SEK(M)$, and uses K to decrypt $SEK(M)$ to recover message M .

Each of receiving locations 2 to n operates in the same manner as receiving location 1 to recover the message M for the user at the location. Thus: the decapsulator
10 at receiving location 2 uses sk_2 to decrypt $E_2(K)$ to provide K , which in turn is used by the symmetric decryptor at location 2 to decrypt $SEK(M)$ to recover M ; receiving location 3 uses sk_3 to decrypt $E_3(K)$ to provide K , which is used to decrypt $SEK(M)$ to recover M ; etc.

It will be noted that the system of Fig 1 requires only one symmetric encryption
15 of the message to be sent, i.e. one and the same symmetric encryption of the message is sent to all receiving locations ($SEK(M)$ is sent to all receiving locations).

Referring to Fig 2, encapsulator 1 of Fig 1 comprises a pseudo random number generator (PRNG) 11, a hash circuit 13, a symmetric key derivation circuit 15, a first series of exponentiation circuits 17-1 to 17- n , a second series of exponentiation circuits
20 19-1 to 19- n , and a series of multiplication circuits 21-1 to 21- n .

PRNG 11 generates a pseudo random number N which is used: (i) by hash circuit 13 to generate a series of random numbers $r_1, r_2, r_3 \dots r_i \dots r_n$; and (ii) by symmetric key derivation circuit 15 to derive symmetric key K . As shown in Fig 1, symmetric key K is supplied to symmetric encryptor 3. Random number r_1 is supplied

to exponentiation circuits 17-1 and 19-1, random number r_2 is supplied to exponentiation circuits 17-2 and 19-2, etc. Random number N is supplied to each of multiplication circuits 21-1 to 21- n .

In addition to being supplied with a random number r_i : (i) each of the first series
 5 of exponentiation circuits 17-1 to 17- n is supplied with a fixed system parameter g (g generates the required group, which could, for example, be a multiplicative group of a finite field or an elliptic curve); and (ii) each of the second series of exponentiation circuits 19-1 to 19- n is supplied with a respective public key pk_1 to pk_n , i.e. pk_1 is supplied to circuit 19-1, pk_2 is supplied to circuit 19-2, etc. Each of the first series of
 10 exponentiation circuits 17-1 to 17- n raises g to the power of the r_i supplied to the circuit. to provide d_i , i.e. circuit 17-1 raises g to the power of r_1 to provide $d_1 = g^{r_1}$, circuit 17-2 raises g to the power of r_2 to provide $d_2 = g^{r_2}$, etc. Each of the second series of exponentiation circuits 19-1 to 19- n raises the pk_i supplied to it by the r_i supplied to it, i.e. circuit 19-1 raises pk_1 to the power of r_1 to provide $pk_1^{r_1}$, circuit 19-2 raises pk_2
 15 to the power of r_2 to provide $pk_2^{r_2}$, etc. The output of exponentiation circuit 19-1 is supplied to multiplication circuit 21-1, the output of exponentiation circuit 19-2 is supplied to multiplication circuit 21-2, etc.

Multiplication circuit 21-1 multiplies the N supplied to it by the output of exponentiation circuit 19-1 to provide $c_1 = N.(pk_1^{r_1})$, multiplication circuit 21-2
 20 multiplies the N supplied to it by the output of exponentiation circuit 19-2 to provide $c_2 = N.(pk_2^{r_2})$, etc.

The outputs c_1 and d_1 taken together constitute $E_1(K)$, the outputs c_2 and d_2 taken together constitute $E_2(K)$, etc.

Referring to Fig 3, decapsulator 5 of Fig 1 comprises an exponentiation circuit 31, an inversion circuit 33, a multiplication circuit 35, a symmetric key derivation circuit 37, a hash circuit 39, and a check circuit 41.

Decapsulator 5 utilises sk_1 to decrypt $E_1(K)$ (constituted by c_1 and d_1) to provide session key K . Decapsulator 5 also provides a Flag to specify whether the decryption was successful.

Exponentiation circuit 31 raises d_1 to the power of sk_1 , i.e. circuit 31 provides $d_1^{sk_1}$. Inversion circuit 33 provides $1/(d_1^{sk_1})$. Multiplication circuit 35 multiplies $1/(d_1^{sk_1})$ by c_1 to provide $c_1/(d_1^{sk_1})$. Now, $c_1 = N.(pk_1^{r_1})$, and $d_1 = g^{r_1}$, see earlier. Substituting gives the output of circuit 35 as $N.(pk_1^{r_1})/g^{(r_1.sk_1)}$. Now, from public key cryptography, $pk_1 = g^{sk_1}$. Substituting gives the output of circuit 35 as $N.(g^{(r_1.sk_1)})/g^{(r_1.sk_1)} = N$. N is supplied to symmetric key derivation circuit 37, which circuit is the same as circuit 15 in Fig 2. This provides the recovered session key K . N is also supplied to hash circuit 39, which circuit is the same as circuit 13 of Fig 2. Check circuit 41 raises g to the power of r_1 as provided by circuit 39, i.e. circuit 41 provides g^{r_1} . Now, $d_1 = g^{r_1}$, see earlier. Check circuit 41 compares the calculated g^{r_1} with d_1 supplied to circuit 41. If they are the same, decryption was successful, otherwise it was not.

The operation of the decapsulators of receiving locations 2 to n of Fig 1 is precisely analogous to that of decapsulator 5 of receiving location 1.

The encapsulator/decapsulator combination of Figs 4 and 5 is based on the so called ElGamal encryption scheme.

The encapsulator of Fig 4 comprises a PRNG 51, a hash circuit 53, a symmetric key derivation circuit 55, a series of exponentiation circuits 57-0 to 57-n, and a series of multiplication circuits 59-1 to 59-n.

PRNG 51 generates a pseudo random number N which is used: (i) by hash circuit 53 to generate a single random number r ; and (ii) by symmetric key derivation circuit 55 to derive symmetric key K . As shown in Fig 1, symmetric key K is supplied to symmetric encryptor 3. Random number r is supplied to each of exponentiation circuits 57-0 to 57-n. Random number N is supplied to each of multiplication circuits 59-1 to 59-n.

In addition to being supplied with random number r : (i) exponentiation circuit 57-0 is supplied with a fixed system parameter g ; and (ii) each of exponentiation circuits 57-1 to 57-n is supplied with a respective public key pk_1 to pk_n , i.e. pk_1 is supplied to circuit 57-1, pk_2 is supplied to circuit 57-2, etc. Exponentiation circuit 57-0 raises g to the power of r to provide $d = g^r$. Each of exponentiation circuits 57-1 to 57-n raises the pk_i supplied to it by r , i.e. circuit 57-1 raises pk_1 to the power of r to provide pk_1^r , circuit 57-2 raises pk_2 to the power of r to provide pk_2^r , etc. The output of exponentiation circuit 57-1 is supplied to multiplication circuit 59-1, the output of exponentiation circuit 57-2 is supplied to multiplication circuit 59-2, etc.

Multiplication circuit 59-1 multiplies the N supplied to it by the output of exponentiation circuit 57-1 to provide $c_1 = N.(pk_1^r)$, multiplication circuit 59-2 multiplies the N supplied to it by the output of exponentiation circuit 57-2 to provide $c_2 = N.(pk_2^r)$, etc.

The outputs c_1 and d taken together constitute $E_1(K)$, the outputs c_2 and d taken together constitute $E_2(K)$, etc.

The decapsulator of Fig 5 comprises an exponentiation circuit 71, an inversion circuit 73, a multiplication circuit 75, a symmetric key derivation circuit 77, a hash circuit 79, and a check circuit 81.

The decapsulator utilises $sk1$ to decrypt $E1(K)$ (constituted by $c1$ and d) to provide session key K . The decapsulator also provides a Flag to specify whether the decryption was successful.

Exponentiation circuit 71 raises d to the power of $sk1$, i.e. circuit 71 provides d^{sk1} . Inversion circuit 73 provides $1/(d^{sk1})$. Multiplication circuit 75 multiplies $1/(d^{sk1})$ by $c1$ to provide $c1/(d^{sk1})$. Now, $c1 = N.(pk1^r)$, and $d = g^r$, see earlier. Substituting gives the output of circuit 75 as $N.(pk1^r)/g^{(r.sk1)}$. Now, from public key cryptography, $pk1 = g^{sk1}$. Substituting gives the output of circuit 75 as $N.(g^{(r.sk1)})/g^{(r.sk1)} = N$. N is supplied to symmetric key derivation circuit 77, which circuit is the same as circuit 55 in Fig 4. This provides the recovered session key K . N is also supplied to hash circuit 79, which circuit is the same as circuit 53 of Fig 4. Check circuit 81 raises g to the power of r as provided by circuit 79, i.e. circuit 81 provides g^r . Now, $d = g^r$, see earlier. Check circuit 81 compares the calculated g^r with d supplied to circuit 81. If they are the same, decryption was successful, otherwise it was not.

The operation of the decapsulators of receiving locations 2 to n of Fig 1 is precisely analogous to that of the decapsulator of receiving location 1 shown in Fig 5.

It will be seen that the encapsulator/decapsulator combination of Figs 4 and 5 is far more efficient than the encapsulator/decapsulator combination of Figs 2 and 3. In particular, the combination of Figs 2 and 3 requires series of random numbers $r1$ to rn (one random number in respect of each intended recipient), whereas the combination of

Figs 4 and 5 requires only one random number r (used for all recipients). The encapsulator of Fig 2 provides the encryptions $E1(K)$ to $En(K)$ utilising public keys $pk1$ to pkn , random number N , and random numbers $r1$ to rn (derived from N). The encapsulator of Fig 4 provides the encryptions $E1(K)$ to $En(K)$ utilising public keys $pk1$ to pkn , random number N , and single random number r (derived from N).
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If the amount of data to be sent is relatively low, the encapsulator/decapsulator combination of Figs 4 and 5 can be used without the need for symmetric encryption by a separate symmetric encryptor as symmetric encryptor 3 of Fig 1. In such case, referring to Fig 4: (i) PRNG 51 and symmetric key derivation circuit 55 would be dispensed with; and (ii) the message to be sent M would replace N , i.e. M instead of N
10 would be supplied to hash circuit 53 and each of multiplication circuits 59-1 to 59- n . Referring to Fig 5: (i) symmetric key derivation circuit 77 would be dispensed with; and (ii) M instead of N would be recovered by multiplication circuit 75. If this encryption/decryption scheme is used, then, for security, it should be combined with the
15 Fujisaki-Okamoto transform, or similar defence against attack. For the Fujisaki-Okamoto transform, see E. Fujisaki and T. Okamoto, Secure integration of asymmetric and symmetric encryption schemes, Advances in Cryptology – CRYPTO 1999, Springer-Verlag LNCS 1666, 537-554, 1999.

In the above secure communication systems of Figs 1 to 3, and Figs 1, 4 and 5,
20 the encapsulator is supplied with the public keys of the intended recipients (each intended recipient possesses a personal public/private key pair assigned as part of a public key cryptography communication scheme). This requires knowledge on the part of the sending party of the public keys of all the intended recipients. There will now be described a modification to the above systems, which modification avoids the

requirement to have knowledge of the public keys of the intended recipients. In the modification, so called identity based keys $id_1, id_2, id_3 \dots id_i \dots id_n$ must be supplied to the encapsulator. An identity based key id_i could, for example, be based on an intended recipient's email address, name or phone number.

5 Figs 6, 7 and 8 illustrate an encapsulator/decapsulator combination. This combination is based on the so called Boneh-Franklin encryption scheme, see D. Boneh and M. Franklin, Identity based encryption from the Weil pairing, Advances in Cryptology – CRYPTO 2001, Springer-Verlag LNCS 2139, 213-229, 2001. Fig 6 illustrates the encapsulator located at the sending location. Fig 7 illustrates the
10 decapsulator located at a receiving location 1 only. Fig 8 illustrates the decapsulator located at each of receiving locations 2 to n.

The encapsulator of Fig 6 comprises a PRNG 91, a hash circuit 93, a symmetric key derivation circuit 95, a series of first hash-to-point circuits 97-1 to 97-n, a series of subtraction circuits 99-1 to 99-(n-1), a series of multiplication circuits 101-(-1) to 101-
15 (n-1), a pairing circuit 103, a second hash-to-point circuit 105, and an exclusive-OR (XOR) circuit 107.

PRNG 91 generates a pseudo random number N which is used: (i) by hash circuit 93 to generate a single random number r ; and (ii) by symmetric key derivation circuit 95 to derive symmetric key K . As shown in Fig 1, symmetric key K is supplied
20 to symmetric encryptor 3. Random number r is supplied to each of multiplication circuits 101-(-1) to 101-(n-1). Random number N is supplied to XOR circuit 107.

Each of first hash-to-point circuits 97-1 to 97-n is supplied with a respective identity key id_1 to id_n , i.e. id_1 is supplied to circuit 97-1, id_2 is supplied to circuit 97-2, etc. Hash-to-point circuit 97-1 implements a first hash-to-point algorithm H_1 to provide

Qid1, hash-to-point circuit 97-2 implements the same first hash-to-point algorithm H1 to provide Qid2, etc. Qid1 is supplied to multiplication circuit 101-0, and each of subtraction circuits 99-1 to 99-(n-1). Qid2 is supplied to subtraction circuit 99-1, Qid3 is supplied to subtraction circuit 99-2, etc.

5 Utilising Qid1 and Qid2, subtraction circuit 99-1 implements a subtraction algorithm SUB to provide T1, utilizing Qid1 and Qid3, subtraction circuit 99-2 implements the same subtraction algorithm SUB to provide T2, etc. T1 is supplied to multiplication circuit 101-1, T2 is supplied to multiplication circuit 101-2, etc.

Utilising r and P (a fixed system parameter which generates the required group),
10 multiplication circuit 101-(-1) implements a multiplication algorithm MULT to provide U . Utilising r and Qid1, multiplication circuit 101-0 implements the same multiplication algorithm MULT to provide U_0 . Utilising r and T1, multiplication circuit 101-1 implements MULT to provide U_1 , utilizing r and T2, multiplication circuit 101-2 implements MULT to provide U_2 , etc.

15 Utilising R (the public key of the trust authority providing the secure communication scheme) and U_0 , pairing circuit 103 implements a pairing algorithm PAIR to provide t to second hash-to-point circuit 105. Second hash-to-point circuit 105 implements a second hash-to-point algorithm H2 to provide W to XOR circuit 107. XOR circuit 107 XORs N and W to provide V (the XOR of circuit 107 could be
20 replaced by any arbitrary symmetric encryption function).

The outputs U and V taken together constitute $E1(K)$ as transmitted by the sending location in Fig 1. The outputs U_1 , U and V taken together constitute $E2(K)$ as transmitted by the sending location in Fig 1, the outputs U_2 , U and V taken together

constitute $E3(K)$ as transmitted by the sending location in Fig 1, the outputs $U3$, U and V taken together constitute $E4(K)$ as transmitted by the sending location in Fig 1, etc.

The decapsulator of Fig 7 comprises a pairing circuit 111, a hash-to-point circuit 113, an XOR circuit 115, a symmetric key derivation circuit 117, a hash circuit 119, and
5 a check circuit 121.

The decapsulator utilises the secret key $S1$ (assigned by the trust authority) of the user at location 1 to decrypt $E1(K)$ (constituted by U and V) to provide session key K . The decapsulator also provides a Flag to specify whether the decryption was successful.

10 Utilising $S1$ and U , pairing circuit 111 implements pairing algorithm PAIR (the same pairing algorithm as implemented by pairing circuit 103 of Fig 6) to provide t to hash-to-point circuit 113. Hash-to-point circuit 113 implements second hash-to-point algorithm $H2$ (the same hash-to-point algorithm as implemented by second hash-to-point circuit 105 of Fig 6) to provide W to XOR circuit 115. XOR circuit 115 XORs W
15 and V to provide N . N is supplied to symmetric key derivation circuit 117, which circuit is the same as circuit 95 of Fig 6. This provides the recovered session key K . N is also supplied to hash circuit 119, which circuit is the same as circuit 93 of Fig 6. This provides r . Utilising r and P , check circuit 121 implements multiplication algorithm MULT (the same multiplication algorithm as implemented by multiplication circuit
20 101-(-1) of Fig 6). Now, in Fig 6, multiplication circuit 101-(-1), utilising r and P , provides U . Check circuit 121 compares the result of its implementation of MULT with U supplied to circuit 121. If they are the same, decryption was successful, otherwise it was not.

The decapsulator of Fig 8 comprises a first pairing circuit 131, a multiplication circuit 133, a point negation circuit 135, a second pairing circuit 137, a hash-to-point circuit 139, an XOR circuit 141, a symmetric key derivation circuit 143, a hash circuit 145, and a check circuit 147.

- 5 The decapsulator utilises the secret key S_i ($1 < i \leq n$) of the user at location i to decrypt $E_i(K)$ (constituted by $U(i-1)$, U and V) to provide session key K . The decapsulator also provides a Flag to specify whether the decryption was successful.

Utilising S_i and U , first pairing circuit 131 implements pairing algorithm PAIR (the same pairing algorithm as implemented by pairing circuit 103 of Fig 6) to provide
 10 t_1 to multiplication circuit 133. Utilising $U(i-1)$ (supplied via point negation circuit 135 which implements a point negation algorithm) and R , second pairing circuit 137 also implements pairing algorithm PAIR to provide t_2 to multiplication circuit 133. Multiplication circuit 133 implements multiplication algorithm MULT (the same multiplication algorithm as implemented by multiplication circuits 101-(-1) to 101-($n-1$)
 15 of Fig 6) to provide t to hash-to-point circuit 139. Hash-to-point circuit 139 implements second hash-to-point algorithm H2 (the same hash-to-point algorithm as implemented by second hash-to-point circuit 105 of Fig 6) to provide W to XOR circuit 141. XOR circuit 141 XORs W and V to provide N . N is supplied to symmetric key derivation circuit 143, which circuit is the same as circuit 95 of Fig 6. This provides the recovered
 20 session key K . N is also supplied to hash circuit 145, which circuit is the same as circuit 93 of Fig 6. This provides r . Utilising r and P , check circuit 147 implements multiplication algorithm MULT (the same multiplication algorithm as implemented by multiplication circuit 101-(-1) of Fig 6). Now, in Fig 6, multiplication circuit 101-(-1), utilising r and P , provides U . Check circuit 147 compares the result of its

implementation of MULT with U supplied to circuit 147. If they are the same, decryption was successful, otherwise it was not.

It will be seen that the encapsulator/decapsulator combination of Figs 6, 7 and 8 is again efficient in that it requires only one random number r (used for all recipients).

5 The encapsulator of Fig 6 provides the encryptions $E1(K)$ to $En(K)$ utilising identity keys $id1$ to idn , random number N, and single random number r (derived from N).

If the amount of data to be sent is relatively low, the encapsulator/decapsulator combination of Figs 6, 7 and 8 can be used without the need for symmetric encryption by a separate symmetric encryptor as symmetric encryptor 3 of Fig 1. In such case, referring to Fig 6: (i) PRNG 91 and symmetric key derivation circuit 95 would be
10 dispensed with; and (ii) the message to be sent M would replace N, i.e. M instead of N would be supplied to hash circuit 93 and XOR circuit 107. Referring to Fig 7: (i) symmetric key derivation circuit 117 would be dispensed with; and (ii) M instead of N would be recovered by XOR circuit 115. Referring to Fig 8: (i) symmetric key
15 derivation circuit 143 would be dispensed with; and (ii) M instead of N would be recovered by XOR circuit 141. If this encryption/decryption scheme is used, then, for security, it should be combined with the Fujisaki-Okamoto transform, or similar defence against attack.

Although the above description concerns two types of asymmetric cryptography,
20 public key and identity based, it is to be appreciated that the present invention is not so limited, and applies also to other types of asymmetric cryptography.